



INTERNATIONAL
FOUNDATION
Academic and Scientific Excellence.™

PANAMA

USF HEALTH OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA



Why Panama?

Since its discovery in 1501, the Panamanian isthmus has been a hub and cultural encounter point, given its strategic geographical position and its tradition of international services. Politically stable, Panama is an important regional clinical trial center for pharmaceutical companies due to the robust health care infrastructure, biodiversity of its environment and the growing number of international researchers housed within the City of Knowledge. Panama also offers additional international public health initiatives, including international cervical cancer studies involving the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institutes of Health's National Cancer Institute.

Key advantages for the USF Health International Foundation in Panama at the City of Knowledge include:

- Abundant biological, ecological, and socio-cultural diversity
- Support services for scientific research and technological innovation
- Access to the country's main higher education and scientific research centers
- Access to the Panama Canal Watershed, a living laboratory for scientific research and the innovation of technology in the management of highly complex tropical ecosystems
- International telecommunications, educational technological services, including a center for teleconferences, education at distance and high-speed Internet connections
- Spanish language training facilities
- Classroom space and conference capabilities
- Housing and food services for students and faculty
- Hotel and conference facility on the City of Knowledge grounds

USF Health International Foundation in Panama develops health programs that complement existing Panamanian academic courses and research. These programs:

- Educate leaders and practitioners for the health professions across the Americas
- Develop and generate funding support for the University of South Florida/City of Knowledge for collaborative research projects that span basic science, clinical investigation, community intervention, and translational studies towards improvement in population health
- Link education and research in their application through community engagement, including extended field experiences for USF Health students, partnerships with international and humanitarian agencies at the City of Knowledge, and advocacy for needed health improvements in the region



Networking Knowledge and Skills for Latin American Health Professionals

USF Health's Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program in Panama provides high quality, state of the art, continuing education activities designed to improve the competence and performance of Latin American health professionals. Combining the expertise of nationally and internationally recognized faculty with the latest training, the CPD program in Panama conducts local events focusing on areas of needed skill sets and knowledge so that regional health professionals can improve the health status of the communities they serve. Latin American health professionals will also have access to exchange courses at USF Health in Tampa, Florida for additional training within USF Health's high tech facilities.

Learning Community Health in Traditional and Non-Traditional Ways

USF Health nursing students experience community health education in a variety of settings from pediatrics, maternity and mental health hospitals, to the mountain villages of Panama's native Indian tribes, as well as the more traditional settings at the University of Panama and its National Nurses Association.





"In Global Health, everybody's health is your health. Mosquitoes and viruses, air and water pollution, and other issues addressed by global health professionals, know nothing of geopolitical borders. Join us in making the world a healthier place for everyone."

- Ann DeBaldo, PhD

Associate Vice President, International Programs, USF Health
Associate Dean, International Programs, College of Public Health

USF Health and Gorgas Regional Training Institute

USF Health has a long-standing relationship with the Gorgas Memorial Institute in Panama City, Panama, and an agreement with the Gorgas Regional Training Institute to provide training in a wide variety of health-related topics to health professionals throughout Central America and the region. Workshops and seminars cover all aspects of pandemic influenza from surveillance and epidemiological studies, to training in clinical and pandemic disaster management with opportunities for USF Health faculty to participate. The US Department of Health and Human Services provided the funding for construction of the state-of-the-art Training Institute and also funds the training courses offered there. The Department of Health and Human Services and the US Food and Drug Administration provided additional funding for future training in food safety and security, and the safety of drugs and medical devices, all timely topics for the region.



Pictured (L-R): Drs. Jorge Motta (retiring director), Ann DeBaldo (Vice President, USF Health International Foundation), Nestor Sosa (Interim Director, Gorgas Memorial Institute)

International Cooperative Biodiversity Group

Panama has some of the highest regional plant diversity in the world for natural product drug discovery. Dennis Kyle, PhD, is the Associate Program Leader for the International Cooperative Biodiversity Group in Panama. The Group is funded by the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation. Dr. Kyle's laboratory at USF Health is actively engaged in natural product drug discovery. Collaborators are the USF Department of Chemistry, USF Center for Biological Defense and the Magellan BioScience Group, Inc.

International Field Experience - Panama

The College of Public Health International Field Experience (IFE) office in collaboration with the USF Health International Foundation in Panama, arranges student field placements in Panama for special projects and international field experiences. IFE is a practicum that is open to all College of Public Health students, and is mandatory for students in the Global Health Practice concentration. IFE is considered an important part of the academic curriculum, serving as a structured and significant educational experience. Under the supervision of the host country supervisor and the guidance of the student's academic advisor, the IFE takes place in an agency, institution, or community in a developing country.

The IFE provides the opportunity to integrate theory and practice in an international public health work environment. The student contributes to a community's resources and to the solution of public health problems and gains an understanding of another culture while developing personal confidence and leadership skills as a public health professional.

"My International Field Experience at Gorgas Memorial Research Institute in Panama was very interesting, to say the least. I went on field excursions and ended up working in Immunology on clinical diagnostic tests for many diseases of public health importance in Panama, such as HIV, Herpes Simplex Viruses, Dengue, Leptospira, Hantavirus, Influenza and others."
MPH Student



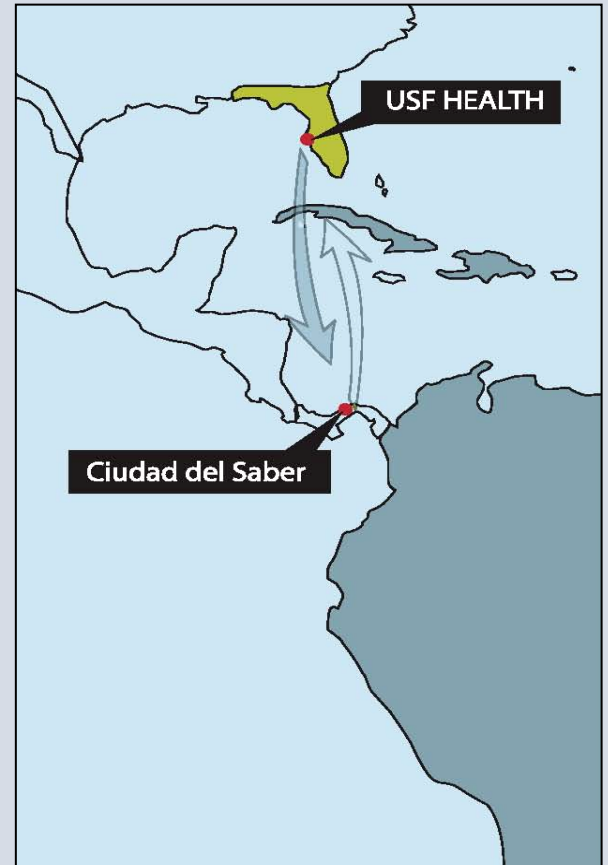
"An International Field Experience is no ordinary study abroad program; it is an opportunity to grow personally and professionally. Not only did my internship with the Pan American Health Organization's Regional Program on Dengue exceed my expectations, but the cultural experience of living in Panama and the confidence I gained from my stay there are invaluable benefits. Being able to make such a contribution during this experience has expanded my view on what an individual can accomplish in public health."

MPH Student

About the Office of International Programs

USF Health's Office of International Programs establishes study abroad, service learning, and field placement sites for USF Health students. Our students have conducted field work in a wide range of countries, including Panama, India, Venezuela, Belize, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Ecuador, Egypt, Greece, Hungary, Costa Rica, Barbados, Bolivia, the Philippines, Thailand, South Africa and Ethiopia.

For international students studying at USF Health, the Office of International Programs facilitates transitions by negotiating obstacles and connecting new students with mentors. In addition, the Office advises on strategies to bring potential global partners together to develop and implement agreements for international education and research projects. Workshops and seminars promote skills needed for success in the global arena, including cultural competency, safety, leadership, and ethics.



For more information on opportunities
to partner with USF Health, please contact:

USF Health Office of International Programs
University of South Florida
13201 Bruce B. Downs Blvd., MDC56
Tampa, FL 33612-3805
Tel: 813-974-7235 or 813-974-6731
Fax: 813-974-6616
e-mail: international_programs@health.usf.edu
website: <http://www.hsc.usf.edu/intprog>

USF Health International Foundation, Panama
Clayton, City of Knowledge, Bldg. 118-B
Panama City, Panama
Tel: 011 + 507-317-1822
website: <http://health.usf.edu/intprog/panama>
Arlene Calvo, PhD, Director
acalvo@health.usf.edu
Aracely Quintero C., Program Manager
aquintero@health.usf.edu



Pictured (left—right):
Dr. Arlene Calvo, Director;
Aracely Quintero C., Program Manager
USF Health International Foundation, Panama

You can also make a difference with your gift to:
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USF Health is dedicated to creating a model of health care based on understanding the full spectrum of health. It includes the University of South Florida's colleges of medicine, nursing, and public health; the schools of biomedical sciences as well as physical therapy & rehabilitation sciences; and the USF Physicians Group. With more than \$360 million in research grants and contracts last year, USF is one of the nation's top 63 public research universities and one of 39 community-engaged, four-year public universities designated by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

